

BON AIR HOME IS COMMENDED BY CHARITIES BOARD

(Continued From First Page.)

opinion that the feeling which called for complaints to Your Excellency had its origin in the employment on the farm in the capacity of general assistant of a negro named Beverly Banks. As a number of witnesses testified, they had no criticism of the home to make except that they thought it wrong in principle and policy to employ a negro in any capacity that gave him control of white girls. Evidence showed that Banks was in the main under the supervision of the matron, Mrs. M. M. Light, but there was also abundant proof that he had virtual control of these unfortunate girls during the time they were employed in field labor. The officers of the home, the matron and the inmates expressed the utmost confidence in the integrity of this negro and strenuously upheld his reputation. Nothing was forthcoming to show that he had violated the trust imposed in him, or had taken the slightest advantage of the girls under his charge. Yet we feel that proper race sentiment would have forbidden the employment of a negro in such a capacity, and we are convinced that in so doing the board made a mistake.

As to the finances of the home, it appears that these have been directed from Richmond by unpaid officers and members of the board, and that the matron has had practically nothing to do with these matters. Evidence was adduced to show that during a considerable period in the history of the home the accounts for expenses were forwarded by the matron to one member of the board, S. P. Waddill, by whom they were approved and sent to the treasurer. The latter gave his check for the aggregate amount of the expenses to Rev. James Buchanan, who deposited the funds in bank and drew his personal check therefor. Our examination disclosed the fact that on the checks issued for individual items there was nothing to indicate the reason for the check or the special account of the home on which it was issued. With considerable difficulty we checked back some of these accounts from the figures which the matron kept for her own protection, and in so doing we had the services of the State Accountant, delegated for the task by your Excellency. The result was distressing. We have found these accounts confused and the system unsatisfactory by comparison with those in use elsewhere for the disbursement of public funds, and we have found that, despite the recommendations of this board made in its visitation report of September 22, 1910, proper checks were not kept for many months. Books should add, in justice to all concerned, that since the treasurer has discontinued the custom of paying to a member of the board, such as using the latter in settling the bills of the home, there has been no just reason for complaint against the finances of the institution.

The Matron in Charge.
We were very favorably impressed with the ability and general character of the present matron, Mrs. M. M. Light. It was brought out in evidence that before this woman took charge of the home discipline for some weeks at least had been very lax. All the evidence showed that when Mrs. Light brought to the home the results of her long experience in rescue work, she had a most difficult task to perform. There is also abundant evidence to show that discipline has greatly improved since her coming, and that the matron has at once the respect and the good will of the young girls in her charge. Nothing derogatory of her efficiency, character or discipline was brought in evidence, while much that was favorable to her was presented. We are of opinion that she is heartily to be commended for faithful and successful performance of most exacting duties. It was apparent, from her evidence and from that of S. P. Waddill, that during the early months of her administration she had been somewhat handicapped by the members of the board regarding matters which were essentially trivial. She has now, however, authority ample for the proper control of the matters entrusted to her. It also appeared that the matron had not been followed in respect to paroles. We are of opinion that she should also be given the veto on paroles, and that no girl should be sent from the home unless the matron approved. We do not think it necessary that the board should in every instance parole the girls she recommends, but we think the maintenance of discipline by her will be aided by the board in declining the parole of girls whom she deems unworthy. Speaking generally, we believe that the matron's control over the girls should be limited as little as possible, and that the functions of

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the board should be confined to matters of business management.

Out-of-Door Exercise.

A large number of the witnesses called by us expressed the opinion that the girls were being overworked in the fields, and that they were given tasks which were improper for women. We went into this very thoroughly, and are of opinion that the best results with girls of this class can be accomplished only by abundant, strenuous, out-of-door exercise. The inmates of this home, it must be remembered, are not normal girls in any sense of the word. Mentally deficient in most cases, neurotic and sometimes nymphomaniac, nothing is as well calculated to restrain them as hard physical exercises. And by this we mean not merely athletic sports and light work, such as house service, but actual field work. In this view agree all those who have made this subject a study, as is well evidenced by the decision of the Philadelphia House of Refuge when it removed to the country in order to give the girls work on the farm. At the New York reformatory for girls (Bedford Hills) the same principle is pursued. There is, of course, a limit to this. No girl should be worked during the midday hours of hot summer days, and no girl in our institution should be made to follow a plow. But hoeing in the field, and the lighter farm labor is not only proper, but necessary. We are aware that those who know nothing of the character of these girls will argue against such work from sentimental reasons, but this cannot shake the wisdom of the policy as exemplified in every successful reform school for girls in the country.

Manual and Vocational Training.

Our investigation disclosed the fact that there is no manual or vocational training at the home beyond the rudiments of plain sewing, cooking and washing. We found, also, that the school had been opened last winter, but that when a mutiny of the girls drove the teacher away, a successor was not appointed. This means that with the exception of the religious training given the girls by the matron and of their out-of-door work, nothing is done for the training of the girls. This is fundamentally wrong. These girls are the wards of the State, committed because they have been sinning or sinned against, and for their welfare the State is responsible. They should not be kept at the home until they are eighteen and then sent out into the world without funds, without friends and without training to make their living. Inevitably, in such circumstances, they are in serious danger of returning to lives of sin. To protect them the State should certainly give them an education and vocational training that will be useful and remunerative.

We found that an attempt had been made to give the girls manual training, but that this had been abandoned for lack of funds. We must earnestly urge its adoption and stand ready to recommend to the General Assembly appropriation therefor. But we would call attention to the fact that the character of the inmates must be kept in mind in any system of manual training that may be introduced. Many of the girls, as will be explained, are feeble-minded and will need permanent custodial care at least until they have passed the child-bearing age. For this reason, they should be given manual training of a type that will be useful to them in an institution for the feeble-minded. The brighter girls can be given different training, the purpose of the whole being adequately to fit the girls for lives of decency.

Good Order Must Be Maintained.

Evidence was before us that on several occasions in the past, the inmates of the home became incensed and were beyond the control of the matron, to

the great prejudice of discipline. We realize fully that such mutinies will occur with girls of this class despite all that can be done, but we feel that the board should do its utmost to prevent these outbreaks by giving the matron sufficient permanent and competent help to keep the girls under control. This is all the more important in view of the fact that such outbreaks, when known, work an injustice to the good name of the institution and to the village near which the home is located.

Punishments.

We have found no evidence of improper punishment at the home, though this appeared to be one of the complaints in the minds of those unfamiliar with the task. From time to time the matron has been forced to correct the girls, but has done so carefully and with due consideration for the welfare of the home. We feel, however, that this is a matter which must be given constant attention, and that great care should be taken to make all punishment reasonable and proportionate to the offense.

Segregation and Classification.

Nothing was more impressed upon us during the hearing than the necessity of classifying the girls and segregating them accordingly. Our special investigator who examined the girls (see evidence, page 279) found that but two of the inmates of the home are mentally normal. Four others were backward, two were borderline cases and the others are plainly feeble-minded. One girl, sixteen years of age, showed a mentality of but little more than seven; many of them tested from three to eight years backward. With so many classes of girls in the home, it is highly important that those whose mentalities make their restoration impossible should be separated from those who can reasonably be expected to return to society. A temporary segregation should be adopted at this time, with a further separation according to the habits of the girls, but complete segregation will never be possible until the State has an institution for those who are distinctly feeble-minded. Bon Air was not intended or equipped as an institution for the feeble-minded, and it can never do its best work until it becomes a reformatory and house of refuge, rather than a school for feeble-minded and wayward alike.

Protection for the Girls.

During the investigation, we had evidence of various attempts on the part of base men to take advantage of the girls while in the home. While the matron expresses herself as able to control the girls, she is often at a loss to know how to deal with these intruders, and she expressed the belief that the matron should be given the control of such persons as were most prejudicial to discipline.

We cannot permit, as a people, the scandal of committing girls to a reform school and of allowing men to interfere with them there. Indeed, unless we are prepared fully to protect these children, we have no right to admit them to the school. For this reason we think it highly important that two things should be done: (1) that the matron be provided with sufficient help of unquestionable character and probity to protect her and her wards from the advances of men; (2) that the General Assembly be requested to declare as a felony cohabitation with the inmate of any such institution, regardless of age or previous character.

Larger Appropriation Must Be Forthcoming.

We found that many of the minor defects at the home were due to the lack of means with which to make improvements which the board had in contemplation. They realize the imperfections of their work, and they know that changes are advisable, but they have not the means to progress rapidly. This is, as a recent writer has said, the great scandal at Bon Air. Surely the State of Virginia, with all its wealth and its enlightened legislature, cannot fail to make ample provision for these unfortunate little daughters of Virginia! Most urgently we plead for larger means and more liberal appropriations for this vital work.

The Work of the Board.

During the investigation it was necessary for us to examine a number of the gentlemen who compose the board which organized and bought this home. We were much impressed with the seriousness and earnestness of these gentlemen, and wish thus publicly to express our appreciation of their efforts. They are busy men, prosperous men, and every hour taken from their individual work means loss and personal sacrifice, yet they have given abundant out-of-door exercise in the field, and that they should continue to do so, we earnestly recommend. And if they have not been able to organize a model home, their failure is to be attributed to their lack of time rather than to their dereliction or neglect.

The State Should Control It.

Our settled conviction, after hearing all the evidence and making as possible, is that if these good men and

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the noble woman who are in charge of this home have not been able to achieve the best results, the ideal situation cannot be reached until the Virginia Home and Industrial School for Girls becomes a State institution. In this view the board of the home concurs, and that this institution is in need of larger appropriations to make it work more effectively, and that it should be given these funds by the General Assembly.

Summary and Conclusions.

To summarize our findings and recommendations, we beg to state: 1. That we find the superintendent of the home well qualified for her work, tactful, wise and successful in the discharge of her exacting duties, and that against her management nothing has been alleged or proved.

2. That the board of the home erred in placing a negro man in any capacity on the farm where he could have any control, of any sort, over white girls.

3. That the accounts of the institution in the past have not been kept in accordance with the usual standard of accounts for the disbursement of public funds, and that these accounts are now in satisfactory shape.

4. That the parole of children should never be granted except for good conduct, with the approval of the matron, and that provision should be made for the adequate after-care of these children.

5. That the girls should be given abundant out-of-door exercise in the field, and that they should continue to do so, we earnestly recommend.

6. That no evidence has been forthcoming that the girls have been overworked, but that there is abundant evidence that the work given them has been necessary, helpful and healthful.

7. That the school board be regularly operated and that suitable provision should be made for the adequate vocational and manual training of the inmates.

8. That a classification of the in-

mates by mentality and habits should be tentatively made as soon as possible and that the inmates who are plainly feeble-minded and in need of permanent custodial care should be sent to an institution for the feeble-minded, where such an institution is operated.

9. That the matron should be given competent help to protect the inmates of the home from the advances of men.

10. That cohabitation with an inmate of this institution, or any institution where feeble-minded women are confined, should be made a felony at law, regardless of the age or previous unchaste life of the girl.

11. That this institution is in need of larger appropriations to make it work more effectively, and that it should be given these funds by the General Assembly.

12. That this institution should be placed under the control of the Commonwealth, and should be operated as are State institutions.

13. That the members of the board who have given generously of their time and means to this work have performed a genuine public service, for which they should receive the thanks of the Commonwealth.

14. That we anticipate the most encouraging results from the continuance and enlargement of this school under State control, and we recommend it to the consideration of the General Assembly.

Respectfully,
S. C. HATCHER, Chairman,
D. S. WINSTON,
D. S. FREEMAN,
L. P. STARNES.

Turpin Goes to Work.
William H. Turpin, the King William County farmer, who was appointed by the board to succeed Beverly Banks, the negro overseer, took up his duties yesterday.

"The girls at the home are now quiet," said Robert Lecky, Jr., member of the board last night, "and no further outbreak on their part is anticipated."

Orders for Annual Reunion of Sons.
General orders have been issued by Samuel J. Rogers, division commander, Virginia Sons of Confederate Veterans, for the annual State reunion at Roanoke September 12, 13 and 14.

Sheriff Kemp Leaves for Bristol.
Sheriff H. Kemp of Henrico County, left yesterday for Bristol, Va., where he will spend several days with relatives. During his absence Deputy Sheriff Webb W. Snyder will be in charge of the county police.

Southern Railway Earnings.
Estimated earnings of the Southern Railway system for the second week in August were: This year, \$1,265,203; last year, \$1,242,238; increase, \$22,965.

News of Petersburg

Times-Dispatch Bureau,
5 Bollingwood Street,
(Phone 1485).

Petersburg, Va., August 23.

Arrangements for the funeral of the late Mayor George Cameron, Jr., have been definitely made. The steamship Bremen, bearing the body, reached here at New York this morning at 9 o'clock. The body will arrive in Petersburg tomorrow morning, under the escort of the committees of the Council and other bodies sent to New York to meet it. It will be taken to the family residence, at 5 o'clock, and will be placed at 5 o'clock to-morrow afternoon from Grace Episcopal Church.

Attending in bodies will be the City Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the bank officials and the lodge of Elks. Business will be generally closed during the hour of the funeral.

PROPOSED APARTMENT HOUSE.

Contract for Erection of Structure May Be Awarded Next Week.
The stockholders of the company which is planning the erection of a modern apartment house on South Sycamore Street, opposite the Central Park, held a meeting last night and reported progress. The financing of the enterprise has been nearly completed, and it is expected that the contract for the erection of the structure will be awarded next week.

DEATH IN DINWIDDIE.

Mrs. Averilla V. Parrish Passes Away in Sixty-eighth Year of Age.
Mrs. Averilla V. Parrish, widow of John J. Parrish, aged sixty-seven years, died this morning about 7 o'clock at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Andrew J. Spain, on Dupuy Road, in

Dinwiddie County, near this city. She had been in declining health for several years. She is survived by one daughter, mentioned above, and one brother, James J. Goodrich, of this city.

John Everett Crafton, the eight-year-old son and eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. James Crafton, of West High Street, died quite suddenly last night of hydrophobia. The child was bitten several weeks ago by a small dog.

SONS OF VETERANS.

Members of Executive Committee Called to Meet at Roanoke.
In connection with the annual reunion of the Virginia Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, to be held in Roanoke, September 12-19, Command-in-chief W. W. Old, Jr., of Norfolk, of the Southern Confederation, has called a meeting of the executive committee of that organization, to be held in Roanoke. This will call together many members from the Southern and Southwestern departments.

Two Marriages.
This afternoon at 3 o'clock, in the parlor of the Stratford Hotel, Miss Ellen Frances Fuller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Fuller, of Stony Creek, and D'Arcy Paul Mays, a merchant of the same village, were married by the Rev. Dr. George E. Booker. Several friends of the couple were present to witness the ceremony.

Miss Mildred G. Woodfin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John T. Woodfin, and Joseph Miller, both of this city, went out to Halifax, N. C., yesterday, where they were married. It was not an elopement. The young couple returned to the city last evening.

Personal and Otherwise.
Miss L. N. Jones, Miss E. M. Patterson, and J. S. King, left for New York

this morning via the Old Dominion line.

Mrs. J. A. J. Robertson, of Raleigh, N. C., is visiting her son, Luther Robertson, on South Sycamore Street.

The Rev. George H. Spooner, pastor of Market Street M. E. Church, and family have gone to Culpeper for their vacation.

Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Fromwell, of

Mount Vernon, Va., who have been on their bridal trip, visiting brothers and sisters in this city and Chesterfield, left this afternoon for Orkney Springs, Va.

Mrs. A. B. Wood, of this city, who has been ill at Charlestown, Md., where she is visiting, is reported as much better.

Odds and Ends From the Wire

JOHN D'S TEA IN PERIL.

Attempt to Burn His Fifty Thousand Dollar Tea House Reported.

Tarrytown, N. Y., August 20.—According to reports abroad in Pleasant Hill an attempt was made a few nights ago to burn John D. Rockefeller's beautiful Japanese tea house, which cost \$25,000.

The story is that one of the Rockefeller workmen found a bunch of inflammable material hidden in the shrubbery near the house and reported his find to the superintendent. The guards on the estate were placed on double duty and two weeks ago Sheriff Doyle.

Mr. Rockefeller's stable was destroyed about six weeks ago, and two weeks ago the studio of his sculptor was burned.

TIPPECANOE VOTER DIES.

Connecticut Man Had Cast Ballots for Middletown, Conn., August 20.—Jesse Spencer, who had voted for nineteen Presidents, including William Henry Harrison, died at Tippecanoe, Ind., at his home in the Candler Wood Hill district from heart prostration.

Spencer had voted for every Republican President since Lincoln, and last fall drove twelve miles to cast his ballot for Taft.

RAILS SPARROW POTITIES.

Succulent Fare Provided for York by Terrible Storm.
York, Pa., August 20.—Hall which fell in a solid street during a terrible storm here last night killed hundreds of English sparrows. They were found this morning in such quantities under the shade trees on the campus of the York Collegiate Institute, a favorite roosting place, that they were swept into heaps, carried away by housewives' baskets to make sparrow potities. Similar conditions were observed upon Penn. Common and Fairbank Park.

CHAMPIONS X-RAY SKIRTS.

Pure Food Official Believes They Further Health and Cleanliness.
Denver, Colo., August 20.—William P. Cannon, former Pure Food Commissioner, has rushed to-day to the defense of the X-ray and silk skirts with these five reasons: 1. The X-ray and silk skirts permit circulation of air about the body.

2. The absence of many undershirts relieves the strain on the hips and prevents kidney trouble.

3. Absence of the usual amount of clothes makes frequent bathing necessary, and frequent bathing opens the pores and makes the latter quite healthy.

4. Absence of many clothes makes body movements freer, thus saving energy.

5. There is less labor required in the care of the clothes, such as washing, ironing and mending.

SINGLE BLESSEDNESS PAYS.

\$300,000 Reward for New York Spinster's Eviction of Cupid.
New York, August 20.—As a reward for not having married, Miss Grace Blewett, an attractive and cultured young woman of 35, Teller Avenue, the Bronx, is to-day held to a fortune of \$300,000 by a spinster aunt in England, who apprehended Miss Blewett's views on the matrimonial question because they coincided with her own.

Miss Blewett is an attractive blonde, of regular features and quietly firm. Many others have courted her since she reached England, but she has been too lacking for her aunt's taste. Miss Blewett's aunt, Dan Cupid's aim was very poor, and Miss Blewett has brought her heart through unscathed.

Of the \$300,000 there is said to be an estate containing thirty houses that rent on an average of \$1,000 each yearly, and the remainder in cash. The property lies mostly in the Cornwall township.

Miss Blewett was enjoying a vacation in Pennsylvania when the news reached her, and she hurried home preparatory to sailing to England with a sister and brother, who also share in the estate.

RUES LURE OF CLEAN CLOTHES.

Boy Fugitive Caught as He Snakes Into Home to Make Change.

Lehigh, Pa., August 20.—Desire to effect a change of clothing resulted in the arrest of Ralph Eckert, a fifteen-year-old Lehigh boy, wanted as a runaway and in connection with the robbery of his father's money.

Ralph came from New York, where he had been six months, to don much-needed clean clothes. He meant to swap out the house at once and return to his haunts again, but was discovered and apprehended. Squire Snyder thought it best to safeguard him in jail, pending trial on the charge of larceny.

TRADE UNION A SPENDER.

British R. R. Men's Society \$80,000 to Bad in One Year.

London, August 20.—An astonishing state of affairs in the Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, a trade union to which about 30,000 railway locomotive drivers and firemen belong. The expenditure of some \$80,000 above the society's income last year has been followed by a compulsory holiday for Secretary Albert Fox.

THREE CANDIDATES HERE.

Many Old Members of House Aspire to Speakership.

Three possible candidates for the speakership of the next House of Delegates were called at the Capitol yesterday. They were Hugh A. White, of Rockbridge; Walter T. Oliver, of Fairfax, and Judge Martin Williams, of Giles.

Judge Williams was Democratic floor leader at the last session, and while a receptive candidate for the speakership, he has not engaged in any active campaign for the position, nor wishing to embarrass his brother, Attorney-General Samuel W. Williams, who was running for re-election.

While Judge Williams was renominated from Giles and Bland Counties with little difficulty, it is reported that he will have strong Republican opposition to meet at the November general election.

Mr. Oliver said he had many assurances of support in his campaign for the speakership, and said he had had a hard fight to secure the renomination in the recent primary.

Mr. White filed with the Secretary of the Commonwealth his statement of expenses, showing that he expended \$185 exclusive of his entrance fee. E. T. Gregory, nominated from New Kent, Charles City, James City, York, Warwick and the city of Williamsburg, filed an expense account showing expenditures of \$35.32.

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